

## **Summary of the Accrediting Authority Committee Meeting April 10, 1997**

The National Environmental Laboratory Accreditation Conference (NELAC) Accrediting Authority Committee met via teleconference from 1:00 p.m. to 2:30 p.m. Eastern Daylight Time (EST) on Thursday, April 10, 1997. The meeting was led by the Committee chair, Mr. John Anderson, Division Manager of the State of Illinois Environmental Protection Agency (IL-EPA). A list of action items is given in Attachment A. A list of Committee members/other participants is given in Attachment B. A copy of the meeting's agenda is given in Attachment C.

### **INTRODUCTION**

Mr. Anderson welcomed all participants to this Accrediting Authority Committee teleconference. Mr. Anderson and Ms. Jeri Long have incorporated wording changes resulting from discussions during the March 27, 1997, teleconference into the current version of Chapter 6. Also, the Chapter was rearranged so that more headings would be incorporated into the Chapter. Incorporating more headings into the Chapter was done in response to a request from the NELAP Director. At the March 13, 1997 Accrediting Authority teleconference, it was decided to do this rearrangement of the Chapter as a final act prior to releasing the Chapter for publication prior to NELAC III. An updated copy of Chapter 6 was e-mailed to each committee member prior to this Committee meeting.

*The purpose of the meeting was to discuss the last few wording changes agreed upon at the March 27, 1997, teleconference, review the Chapter's rearrangement and approve the Chapter as the Committee's work product to be presented to NELAC III for adoption.* The following items were discussed:

- The final wording changes agreed upon at the March 27, 1997 teleconference.
- The rearrangement of Chapter 6 and the new headings incorporated therein.
- Approval of the Chapter for presentation to NELAC III.

### **SYSTEMATIC DISCUSSION OF THE REVISIONS RESULTING FROM THE MARCH 27, 1997, TELECONFERENCE**

#### **The Addition of a Flow Chart and Timetable to Chapter 6**

As a result of a comment at the NELAC III meeting, John Anderson and Jeri Long prepared a flow chart and timetable for NELAP recognition of an accrediting authority. The chart sets forth the process and timelines by which an accrediting authority becomes NELAP recognized. The flow chart and timetable were faxed to the Committee members prior to this teleconference. After discussion and some minor editorial changes, the Committee approved the content of the flow chart and it was incorporated into Chapter 6 as Figure 1.

## The Addition of More Headings to Chapter 6

As a result of a comment at the NELAC III meeting, Mr. Anderson and Ms. Long rearranged the text of Chapter 6 to accommodate more section headings than were included in the version on the floor at the NELAC III meeting. The commenter felt more headings would make it easier to find specific provisions in Chapter 6, and the Committee concurred. The rearrangement of the standards was approved by the Committee. Some minor editorial changes to the text needed to accommodate the rearrangement also were approved. The following is a list of the new headings:

- 6.3.3.1 Required Technical Elements of a NELAP-Recognized Accrediting Authority's Program
- 6.3.3.1. Records  
1
- 6.3.3.1. Use of Contractors by an Accrediting Authority  
2
- 6.3.3.1. Accrediting Authority's Quality System  
3
- 6.3.3.2 Application Technical Review Report
- 6.3.4 Notification of Changes to An Accrediting Authority's Program
- 6.5 Accrediting Authority's Request For Extension Of Time To Comply With The NELAC Standards
- 6.8 Use Of Accreditation By NELAP Accredited Laboratories

Figure 1 Flow Chart for NELAP Recognition of An Accrediting Authority

### Subsection 6.2.1 (b) Reciprocity

As a result of a comment made at the NELAC III meeting, the following changes were made so that a secondary accrediting authority could accept a laboratory's NELAP accreditation for fields of testing for which that secondary accrediting authority did not hold NELAP recognition:

“When granting reciprocal accreditation to a laboratory, the NELAP-recognized secondary accrediting authority shall:

- ~~1) grant reciprocal accreditation for only the fields of testing for which the NELAP-recognized secondary accrediting authority holds NELAP recognition; and~~
- ~~2) grant reciprocal accreditation for only the fields of testing for which the laboratory holds current primary NELAP accreditation as provided in subsection (a) above.”~~

**Subsection 6.2.1 (e) Reciprocity**

The Committee approved the following new language:

“If a NELAP-recognized secondary accrediting authority ~~denotes~~ any nonconformance with the NELAC standards by a laboratory during the initial application process for reciprocal accreditation or for a laboratory that it has already granted NELAP accreditation through reciprocity, the NELAP-recognized secondary accrediting authority shall immediately notify, in writing, the applicable NELAP-recognized primary accrediting authority. The notification must cite the applicable sections within the NELAC standards for which nonconformance by the laboratory has been noted.

- 1) If the nonconformance is noted during the initial application process for reciprocal NELAP accreditation, final action on the application for reciprocal NELAP accreditation shall not be taken until the nonconformance issue has been resolved, or
- 2) If the nonconformance is noted after reciprocal NELAP accreditation has been granted, the laboratory shall maintain its current NELAP accreditation status until the nonconformance issue has been resolved.”

**Section 6.5 (a)(1) ACCREDITING AUTHORITY’S REQUEST FOR EXTENSION OF TIME TO COMPLY WITH THE NELAC STANDARDS**

A question was raised concerning the fact that an accrediting authority might apply for NELAP recognition even if the areas of nonconformance with the NELAC standards were substantial. In the extreme case, an accrediting authority with no environmental laboratory accreditation program could apply for NELAP recognition claiming that the only changes to its program needed for NELAP recognition were those requiring legislation or rulemaking changes. Obviously, this was not intended. Therefore, to lessen the concern regarding granting NELAP recognition to an accrediting authority which was not substantially compliant with the NELAC standards, the Committee approved the following new language:

“Upon written request to the NELAP Director, through the NELAP assessment team, an extension of time, not to exceed two years, to correct deficiencies noted in the accrediting authority’s application and/or deficiencies noted during the on-site audit will be granted only:

- 1) when an applicant accrediting authority has an operating environmental laboratory accreditation program for the fields of testing for which it is seeking or renewing NELAP recognition, and
- 2) when implementation of corrective actions to correct application and/or audit deficiencies requires the accrediting authority to promulgate new or revised regulations, or

- 3) when implementation of corrective actions to correct application and/or audit deficiencies requires the accrediting authority to seek new or revised legislation.”

## **EDITORIAL CHANGES**

Several other minor wording changes of an editorial nature were approved by the Committee.

## **APPROVAL OF CHAPTER 6 FOR SUBMISSION TO THE NELAC III**

No Committee member made any further suggestions for wording changes to Chapter 6. The Committee then unanimously agreed that Chapter 6 is ready to be proposed at the NELAC III for adoption as the standards for NELAP recognition of accrediting authorities. Mr. Anderson and Ms. Long were directed to prepare a “clean” version of Chapter 6 and to send a copy to the Committee members. They also were directed to furnish a copy of Chapter 6 to the Coordination Committee by April 15, 1997, and to Ms. Jeanne Mourrain and Dr. Charles Hartwig.

## **CONCLUSION**

Since the Committee has completed its work, the remaining teleconferences will be canceled. Mr. Anderson concluded the meeting by thanking the Committee members for their efforts in finalizing Chapter 6. As a final action, the Committee voted to meet for a celebration dinner during the NELAC III meeting in Dallas. Mr. Bob Wyeth volunteered to make the arrangements for the dinner.

## **NEXT TELECONFERENCE**

Mr. Anderson will schedule the next teleconference prior to the NELAC III to discuss any issues resulting from the review by the Coordination Committee.

**Attachment A**

**ACTION ITEMS  
Accrediting Authority Committee Meeting  
April 10, 1997**

Item No.	Action	Date Completed
1	Mr. Anderson was directed to furnish a final Committee-approved version of Chapter 6 to Ms. Jeanne Mourrain and Dr. Charles Hartwig with a statement stating that the Accrediting Authority Committee had finished its work.	04/16/97
2	Mr. Anderson was directed to furnish a final Committee-approved version of Chapter 6 to Dr. Jim Pearson for use by the Coordination Committee.	04/15/97
3	Mr. Anderson was directed to schedule a teleconference a few weeks prior to NELAC so the Committee could finalize its plans for NELAC III.	

**LIST OF COMMITTEE MEMBERS/MEETING PARTICIPANTS**  
**Accrediting Authority Committee Meeting**  
**April 10, 1997**

<b>Name</b>	<b>Affiliation</b>	<b>Phone/Fax/E-mail</b>
John Anderson	Illinois EPA, Division of Laboratories	Tel: 217-782-6455 Fax: 217-524-0944 E-mail: epa6103@epa.state.il.us
Roger Bucholz (absent)	Red Hawk Laboratory, Inc.	Tel: 703-684-4468 Fax: 703-548-9446 E-mail: 500hawk@500hawk.com
Maude Bullock (absent)	Department of the Navy	Tel: 703-602-1738 Fax: 703-602-5547 E-mail: bullockm@n4.opnav.navy.mil
Jack Farrell	Analytical Excellence, Inc.	Tel: 407-331-5040 Fax: 407-331-4025 E-mail: AEX@ix.netcom.com
Mary Ann Feige (absent)	USEPA, Cincinnati	Tel: 513-569-7944 Fax: 513-569-7191 E-mail: feige.maryann@epamail.epa.gov
Jeff Flowers	Flowers Chemical Laboratories	Tel: 407-339-5984 Fax: 407-260-6110 E-mail: jeff@flowerslabs.com
Jim Meyer	NC EHNH/DEM Chemistry Lab	Tel: 919-733-3906 Fax: 919-733-6241 E-mail: NA
Aurora Shields (absent)	Kansas Dept. of Health and Environment	Tel: 913-296-6196 Fax: 913-296-1641 E-mail: laportela@aol.com
Bob Wyeth	RECRA Environmental, Inc.	Tel: 716-691-2600 Fax: 716-691-2617 E-mail: labnet@recra.com
Carol Madding (substitute for Mary Ann Feige)	USEPA, Cincinnati	

**LIST OF COMMITTEE MEMBERS/MEETING PARTICIPANTS**

**Accrediting Authority Committee Meeting**

**April 10, 1997**

<b>Name</b>	<b>Affiliation</b>	<b>Phone/Fax/E-mail</b>
Jeri Long	Illinois EPA, Division of Laboratories (Assistant to the Chair)	Tel: 217-782-6455 Fax: 217-524-0944 E-mail: epa6110@epa.state.il.us

**AGENDA**  
**Accrediting Authority Committee Meeting**  
**April 10, 1997**

**1:00 p.m. - 4:00 p.m. - Eastern Daylight Time**

- 1:00 p.m.**                      Review final wording changes resulting from March 27, 1997 teleconference.
- Review rearrangement of Chapter 6.
- Take final vote on approval of Chapter for release for publication prior to NELAC III.
- Make plans for Committee functions between now and NELAC III. Do we want to schedule another teleconference prior to NELAC III?
- 3:45 p.m.**                      Review progress. Make assignments for next meeting.
- 4:00 p.m.**                      Automatic shut-off of teleconference. Hopefully we will conclude much earlier than 4:00 p.m.